THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE:

OR, A Summary View OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,

AS

The *Records* of True Religion; and as the *Inſtrument* which GOD uſes for making Men Truly Religious;

CONTAINING

A few, ſhort, and plain *Directions*; by the Help of which, a Chriſtian may take up the *Idea* of his Religion from *BIBLE* it ſelf; and may read the Word of God with Judgment, and Profit.

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Ri: B. Wond & Ri: Dun

August ye 13th 1708
then Examined this
Book by Richard
Turner: which said
Book was given to me:
and to Richard Browne:
by Rob Doughty Esqr:
Dat: ye 10th 1701 &c.

THE RELIGION OF THE Bible, &c.

THERE is no *Book*, from which, we can Learn our *Religion*, with ſuch Eaſe, and Safety, as from the *Holy Scriptures*; which are the *Inſtrument* that God uſes, to Teach men by; and in which *God* ſpeaks unto us, by *his word*.

The Word of God is the Standard of Religion

This Book we are therefore to have the greateſt *Veneration* for, and to make the moſt Conſcientious *Uſe* of: ſo we ſhall be preſerved

from that *Ignorance* and *Error*, which are Fatal to the Intereſt of Religion, and to the Souls of Men.

That we may *Study* the Doctrine of our Religion in *this Book*, with *Advantage* and *Succeſs*, the *Directions* following are given.

§. 1.

Religion in general.

Religion is a Law, Mat. 21, 31, 34, & 19. 24. *Mar.* 1. 14, 15, & 4. 30.

The *State* of *Religion* is called *the Kingdom of God*; and *the Kingdom of Heaven*: and the Sum or Subſtance of Practical *Religion* is, to Obey the Laws of *that Kingdom of God*, to which we belong, however thoſe Laws ſhall be made known unto us.

Thoſe

Thoſe Laws are *Holy*, i. e. Juſt, and Good: Good in themſelves, and Good for us. By Obedience to thoſe Laws men became ſuch as the Laws themſelves are: they ſo become Better men, and every one that is concerned with them, is the better for them. *Rom.* 7. 12.

§. 2.

BEFORE *Moſes* (1.) The Being, and Providence of *God*, (2.) The Difference of Moral *Good* and *Evil*, (3.) The Certainty of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* were manifeſted to Men, by the Nature, and Relation of things; and by the Occaſional Intercourſe, which was between the Viſible and Inviſible World. 1ſt. Natural Religion. *That Law is the Law of our Nature*, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15.

The *Moral Law*, the Rule of Righteouſneſs, and of Religion; is a Tranſcript of the *Moral Perfections of God*, of his Holineſs, Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs: and therefore Religion is an
Eph. 5. 1. *Imitation of God*; for which reaſon no man can have *Right* apprehenſions of Religion, that has *Wrong* ap-apprehenſions of God.

Rom. 2. 14, 15. The Moral Law, is the *Law* of our *Nature*: this Religion we are *made* to, by that Modeſty, Tenderneſs, and Ingenuity which are *Natural* to Men, and *Fundamental* to the great Duties of Sobriety, Righteouſneſs, and Godlineſs. Nor can any man of an improved Underſtanding, become groſly wicked and irreligious, till theſe Natural *Principles* are ſpoiled

ſpoiled, by violent and unnatural Practice.

And it muſt be *for our Good*, Religiouſly to obſerve this Law of our Nature; ſince the Individual is marr'd and deſtroy'd by *Intemperance*; the Society is diſturbed and exaſperated by *Injuſtice*; and God is neglected and diſhonoured by *Profaneſs*. Theſe are the worſt Evils which befal Mankind, and are cauſed by their own Vices, contrary to what God deſigned they ſhould be, do, and enjoy.

§. 3.

BY the Miniſtry of Angels, God made known his mind and will to *Moſes* concerning

2*ly*, Revealed Religion I. Jewiſh. *Acts* 7. 53. *Gal.* 3. 19.

cerning Religion: in which *Revelation*, he Owned and Repeated, Re-eſtabliſhed and Re-inforced *that* which is the Law of our Nature; and ſet up a *Poſitive Inſtitution*, and *Political State* of Religion among the *Jews*, called the *Old* and *Firſt Covenant*, or *Teſtament*.

Heb. 8. 6, &c *and the Ten Commandments contain that Law; and the Moral part of the Jewiſh Religion.* *Deut.* 4. 13. & 9. 9. & 29. 1.

In that State of Religion among the *Jews*, the *Ten Commandments* were the Fundamental Laws of *that Kingdom of God*; and the Summary Rule of Religious Life: a few plain, and ſhort Precepts, ſufficient for the Conduct of all men, who were Obliged to be Religious, and who were honeſtly reſolved ſo to be. Religion is a Law: and Obedience to that Law

is

is for the *Good* of those who are to be Religious. *Deut.* 10. 13 *Mic.* 6. 8.

§. 4.

The *Ten Commandments* are distinguished into *Two Tables*: the *first* Table containing the Duty of *Piety* towards God; and the *Second* Table containing the Duty of *Righteousness* towards men: and *these Words* of the Covenant, were the Substantial and Chief part of their Religion; the *great things* of God's Law. *These Ten Commandments are distinguished into 2 Tables, Deut.* 9. 15. *Ex.* 32. 15, &c. *Ex.* 34. 1, &c. *Mat.* 22. 40. *Hos.* 8. 12.

§. 5.

The Duty of *Piety* towards God is contained in the *four* first Commandments: and the Observing these *1st Piety towards God.*

theſe Commandments, prevents that *Slavery* of Mind, which *Superſtition* or falſe Religion introduceth; and confines us to the *Service* of the *True God*, which is Liberty, and Priviledge.

Deut. 13. 2, 3.

I. *Commandment.*

1. *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods*, &c. This forbids *Polytheiſm*, and the falſe Objects of Religious Worſhip; the many, and falſe Gods.

2. *Commandment*

2. *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image*, &c. This forbids Idolatry, and Superſtition; or the Falſe Mediums of Religious Worſhip, as the Idols were.

3. *Commandment*

3. *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*, &c. This forbids all Profaneſs, and Perjury or falſe Swearing.

4. *Re-*

4. *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day*, &c. This appoints one day in Seven, as the Seaſon for Religious, and Solemn Worſhip. 4. *Commandment*

And thus we are to fear *Jehovah* the Only true God (Creator and Governour of the World; who is *Glorious in Holineſs*) for our good. *Ex.* 15. 11. *Deut.* 6. 24.

§. 6.

II. the Duty of *Righteouſneſs*, or doing Right to men is contained in the *ſix* laſt Commandments: and the keeping every one of them is *for our good*, as much as univerſal Juſtice, and Charity are; which do no ill, but all good to men. 2ly, *Righteouſneſs towards men* *Rom.* 13. 8, 9, 10.

5. *Honour*

5. *Commandment* 5. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, &c. This ſecures Childrens requiting of their Parents.

6. *Commandment* 6. *Thou ſhalt do no murder.* This ſecures the Life of one man againſt the Violence of another.

7. *Commandment* 7. *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.* This ſecures the Chaſtity of all Perſons; and the Honour of Marriage.

8. *Commandment* 8. *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.* This ſecures the Goods and Eſtates of men, to them.

9. *Commandment* 9. *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs*, &c. This ſecures the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, and Legal defence of Right.

10. *Commandment* 10. *Thou ſhalt not covet*, &c. This ſecures unfeigned good Will and Charity; by Preventing thoſe Deſires to the con-

contrary, which the inordinate, and exceſſive Affectation of *Pleaſure*, *Wealth*, or *Honour*, occaſion in Men. 1 *John* 2. 15,16.

§. 7.

As *Piety* towards God, and *Righteouſneſs* towards men, (doing Right to God, and men) are the Great things of Religion, and Weightier Matters of the Law; ſo (2.) in the *Pſalms* of *David* there are Exerciſes of Devotion, and *Piety*: And (1.) in the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*, there are Rules of Righteouſneſs, and Goodneſs; by which Books, thoſe parts of Spiritual Religion, may be more fully underſtood. *Theſe parts of Religion are enlarged upon in the Pſalms and Proverbs.*

§. 8.

§ 8.

and promoted by Job and Eccleſiaſtes,

To which add (1.) the Uſe of the Book of *Job*; for Reconciling the Minds of Men to the *Sufferings* of the World: and (2.) the Uſe of the book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, for moderating the Deſires of Men towards the *Enjoyments* of the World: both which are Comprehended in *Sobriety*, which is Fundamental to *Righteouſneſs* and *Godlineſs*; and is the right *Uſe*, and the right *Government* of our ſelves.

§. 9.

and by Examples in the Hiſtorical Books.
Tit. 2. 12.

The Hiſtorical books of the Old Teſtament, from *Geneſis* to *Eſther*; contain,

(1.)

(1.) *Examples* of Obedience, and Disobedience; and (2.) shew how God, in all Ages, Rewarded the Obedient, and Punished the Disobedient; in this Life. 1 *Cor.* 10. 1. *Rom.* 15. 4.

§. 10.

The *Prophets* lived before, in, or after the Captivity; and their Books contain the Addresses, which *God* made by Them, unto the *Jews*, (who were then very Wicked, and Hypocritical) *Dissuading* them from their Disobedience by the *Threatning* of Punishment; and *Perswading* them to Repentance, and Obedience; by the *Promises* of Reward.

And,

And, as (1.) the Difference of moral *good and evil* is manifeſted by the Commandments; ſo by theſe books (2.) the Being and Providence of *God*, and (3.) the certainty of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* are inculcated.

§. II.

The Ceremonial and Judicial Laws were peculiar to the Jews, Acts 15. 21.

(1*ſt.*) The *Moral* Laws, are Common to all Mankind, but (2*ly.*) the *Ceremonial* Laws contained in *Exodus*, and *Leviticus*, and *Numbers*; were peculiar to the *Jews*, *viz.* (1.) concerning the outward *Polity* of the *Jewiſh Church*: and (2.) concerning the outward *Forms* of the *Jewiſh Worſhip*: Alſo (3*ly.*) the *Judicial Laws* contained in the ſame books, were peculiar to the *Jews*,

Jews, viz. (1.) concerning the fundamental Eſtabliſhment of the Jewiſh *State*: and (2.) concerning the Outward Form of the Jewiſh *Government*.

§. 12.

In the Obligation of theſe *Ceremonial*, and *Judicial* Laws, we *Chriſtians* are not concerned; they being peculiar to the *Jews*, and never were Impoſed upon the reſt of Mankind.

and never did oblige any others. Acts 15.18, 10,23--29.

But all the *Moral part* of Religion contained in the *Old Teſtament*, (and Summarily in the *Ten Commandments*) is ſtill of Uſe to us, for our Direction, and Admonition: the *Moral Law* being of Eternal and unchangeable,

changeable, of natural and universal Obligation.

This was the Religion of the *Jews*: and universal Righteousness is the Religion of all *Mamkind*; is an Imitation of God, is Good in it self; and is therefore enjoined, as good, and necessary for Men.

§ 13.

II. Christian Religion 1. *The Moral part of the Christian Religion, is also a Law.*

THE Religion of a *Christian*, (1.) *Begins* in Repentance, and Faith: (2.) *Proceeds* in Obedience to the Commandments of God, as Explained, and Vindicated by *Jesus Christ*: and (3.) *Ends* in Happiness, and the *Salvation of Glory*.

This

This *Inſtitution of a Chriſtian* we have in the Sermons and Diſcourſes of our Bleſſed Saviour, which contain a Recognition, and Acknowledgment, a Repetition and Re-inforcement of the *Moral Law* delivered before in the *Ten Commandments* (the *Elements*, and *Fundamentals* of true Religion among the *Jews*) and this Law of Everlaſting Righteouſneſs, thus explained by *Jeſus Chriſt*, is the Religion of *Chriſtians*: for the *Meſſiah* was to deſtroy the works of the Devil, and to bring in Everlaſting Righteouſneſs; which is the *Salvation of Grace.*

The doctrine of Chriſtianity is contained in the Diſcourſes of Chriſt;

Vid. §. 5, 6.

§. 14.

which Discourses are distinguishable into four parts.

All the *Discourses* of our Blessed Saviour, may be comprehended in, or reduced unto these *four* practical Propositions.

Mat. 5, 6, 7, & 18, *&c.* 1. That the *Substance* of *true Religion* is Obedience to the *Moral Law.*

Mat. 10, & 11, & 21. 2. That *Wicked men* are unwilling to come under the *Obligation* of such a Religion.

Mat. 13. & 23. 3. That *Hypocritical Professors compremise* the Difference between their Vicious Inclinations, and their Holy Religion.

Mat. 24. & 24. 4. That such *Hypocrisy* exposes men to the *Vengeance*

geance of God, as much as the worſt *Profaneſs* and *Immorality.*

§. 15.

This is the *Moral part* of Chriſtianity; in which, to Live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly, upon the *Principles*; and according to the *Meaſures* of Chriſtianity, is *That* in our Religion, which hath in it, the Nature and Place of an *End:* and to which, as ſuch, every thing elſe is Subordinate. *This Righteouſneſs is Final in our Religion.*

But (1.) *Prayer*, in which *We* make our Addreſſes unto God; and (2.) the *Miniſtry of the Word*, in which, *God* makes his Addreſſes *Prayer and Hearing are Inſtrumental.* *Acts* 6. 4.

unto us, have in them the Nature, and Place of a *Means*. As our Prayers muſt be according to the Will of God, ſo *Chriſt* has taught us a Form of *Prayer*, agreeable to the Doctrine of *His* Religion.

Luk. 11. 1, *&c.*

§. 16.

2. The poſitive part of Chriſtian Religion (1.) as to matters of Faith, (1.) Jeſus & the Reſurrection Acts 17. 18. *Acts* 24. 14, 15, 16. *Luke* 24. 47.

To this (1.) *Moral part* of the *Chriſtian* Religion, muſt be added (2.) that which is Supernatural, and *Poſitive*, viz. (1.) The *Mediation* of *Chriſt* for the Reconciling of Sinners, by Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins. thro' his Blood: and (2.) the *Reſurrection* of the Dead, for the Final Rewarding of the Righteous, and

and Puniſhing the Wicked in Eternity.

To which muſt alſo be added the *Poſitive Commands*, (1.) concerning *Baptiſm*; for the Initiation of Chriſtians: and (2.) concerning the *Lord's Supper*, for the Commemoration of Chriſt, and his Death, (the great *Propitiation* and *Federal* Rite.)

(2.) as to matters of Practice, is the two Sacraments.

§. 17.

The *Natural*, and *Moral*; the *Supernatural*, and *poſitive* *parts* of Chriſtianity are farther Enlarged upon, in the *Diſcourſes* of the *Apoſtles*, contained in the Hiſtory of their *Acts*, and in their *Epiſtles*: and thus we

This (1.) Inſtitution of Chriſtianity is enlarged upon in the Sermons of the Apoſtles;

have (1*st*.) the Compleat *Inſtitution* of Chriſtianity in the Sermons and Diſcourſes (1.) of *Chriſt*, and (2.) of his *Apoſtles*, viz. the beſt Meaſures, and the beſt Principles of everlaſting Righteouſneſs: and (2*ly*.) the *Demonſtration* of Chriſtianity in the Miraculous Works, Gifts, and Powers of the Holy Ghoſt; Recorded in the *Goſpels*, and in the *Acts*: and this *Demonſtration of the Spirit* is the Proof of our Religion; one very conſiderable part of which Proof was the *Reſurrection* of Chriſt.

as alſo the (2.) Demonſtration of Chriſtianity;

1 *Cor.* 2. 4. *Rom.* 1. 4. 1 *Pet.* 3. 18.

§. 18. The

§. 18.

The Epiſtles contain, (3*dly.*) the *Vindication* or Defence of the Religion of *Chriſt*, (1.) againſt *Infidels*, *Jews*, and *Pagans*: (2.) againſt *Judaizing*, and *Paganizing* Believers. *and the (3.) Vindication of it in the Epiſtles.* 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. 13, 15. & 2 *Pet.* 3. 1.

The Epiſtles contain alſo an *Inculcation* of the Practice of this Religion upon the Conſciences of Chriſtians; Teaching them, that *God* made uſe of *Chriſt*, as his great Inſtitution, for bringing in *Everlaſting Righteouſneſs*; and that *They* muſt make Uſe of *Chriſt*, by way of Argument and Reaſon, for the Setting up this *Everlaſting*

ing Righteouſneſs in themſelves and others; for there is no Religion properly *Chriſtian*, without *Chriſt*.

Col. 3. 11.

That Improvement which is made by the Practice of this Religion, is the neceſſary *Preparation* for the Happineſs of Heaven: and no Man is truly Religious, whoſe Religion is not a *Vital Principle* in him.

§. 19.

Laſtly, there is a Propheſy concerning the future State of the Church in the Apocalyps.

The *Revelation* of Saint *John*, contains a Prophetical Account (1.) of that *Proſperity*, and *Adverſity*, which ſhall, at ſeveral times, befal the Church of *Chriſt*, unto the End of the World:

World: together (2.) with the *Corruptions*, and *Reformations* of Religion.

§. 20.

THIS is a ſhort *Idea*, or Repreſentation of true Religion, which the *Scriptures* of the *Old*, and *New Teſtament* give us: and he that Reads, and Studies the Scriptures, with this *Notion* of Religion in his Mind, may Learn what the Doctrine of Religion is, more fully; from *God Himſelf* Teaching it, in his Written Word. From thence 'tis certain, that Vertue is *Wiſdom*; and it muſt be *Folly* which makes men think any thing Wiſer than *that*.

This Religion may be learned from the Word of God:

§. 21. And

§. 21.

and from the Preaching of his Ministers.
2 *Tim.* 4. 1.--5. 2 *Tim.* 2. 2. 1 *Tim.* 1. 3.--11. 1 *John* 4. 1.

And with the *ſame Notion* of Religion in our Minds, we muſt hear *Sermons*; by which Diſcourſes, we ſhall better underſtand the Doctrine of our *Religion*, and of the *Holy Bible*, which is the Divine *Standard* of Religion; by which, all Doctrines of Religion muſt be *Try'd*; and to which the Doctrine of *True* Religion is perfectly, and manifeſtly Agreeable.

§. 22.

but take heed of Superſtition:

But no Man, or Company of *Men* whatſoever, can

can *make* any part of true Religion: and if any thing be Made by Men, and Impoſed as Religion, it is not true Religion, but *Superſtition.* And ſuch Superſtition, or falſe Religion men *have made*, and have mixed that Falſe Religion of their own making, with the True Religion which *God* made. The *Pagans* did ſo with Natural Religion: the *Jews*, and *Samaritans* did ſo with the Moſaical Religion: and the *Papiſts* have done ſo with the Chriſtian Religion.

Gen. 31. 19, 34, 35. *Joſh* 24. 17.--25. & 2 *Kings* 17. 7, *&c.* 24.

§. 23. We

§. 23.

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1. 10---
& *Iſ.*66.
3.

We muſt take heed of *Hypocriſy*, as well as of Superſtition: *i. e.* we muſt take heed of Joining together in our Practice, a pretended *Strictneſs* in ſome Leſſer matters of Religion, and groſs *Licentiouſneſs* in any Inſtances of *Immorality*, (which are contrary to the Weightier Matters of the Law of God, and the moſt neceſſary Duties of True Religion) as the *Phariſees* did.

To Conclude, 'Tis an abundant Recommendation of True Religion, that it is *entirely for our Good:* and that

that the Practice of it Transforms Men into the *Likeneſs of God*; by Righteouſneſs, and Goodneſs; which is the Rectitude and Perfection of our Nature, the Foundation and Eſſentials of our Happineſs.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

FINIS.

Ri: Browne. and Ri: Tu
owns this Book. given to